

# RAMBLES ROUND EDINBURGH

BY

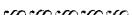
FRANCES L. HENDERSON

A Series of Short Walks, with  
Illustrations and Map of  
the City showing  
Routes

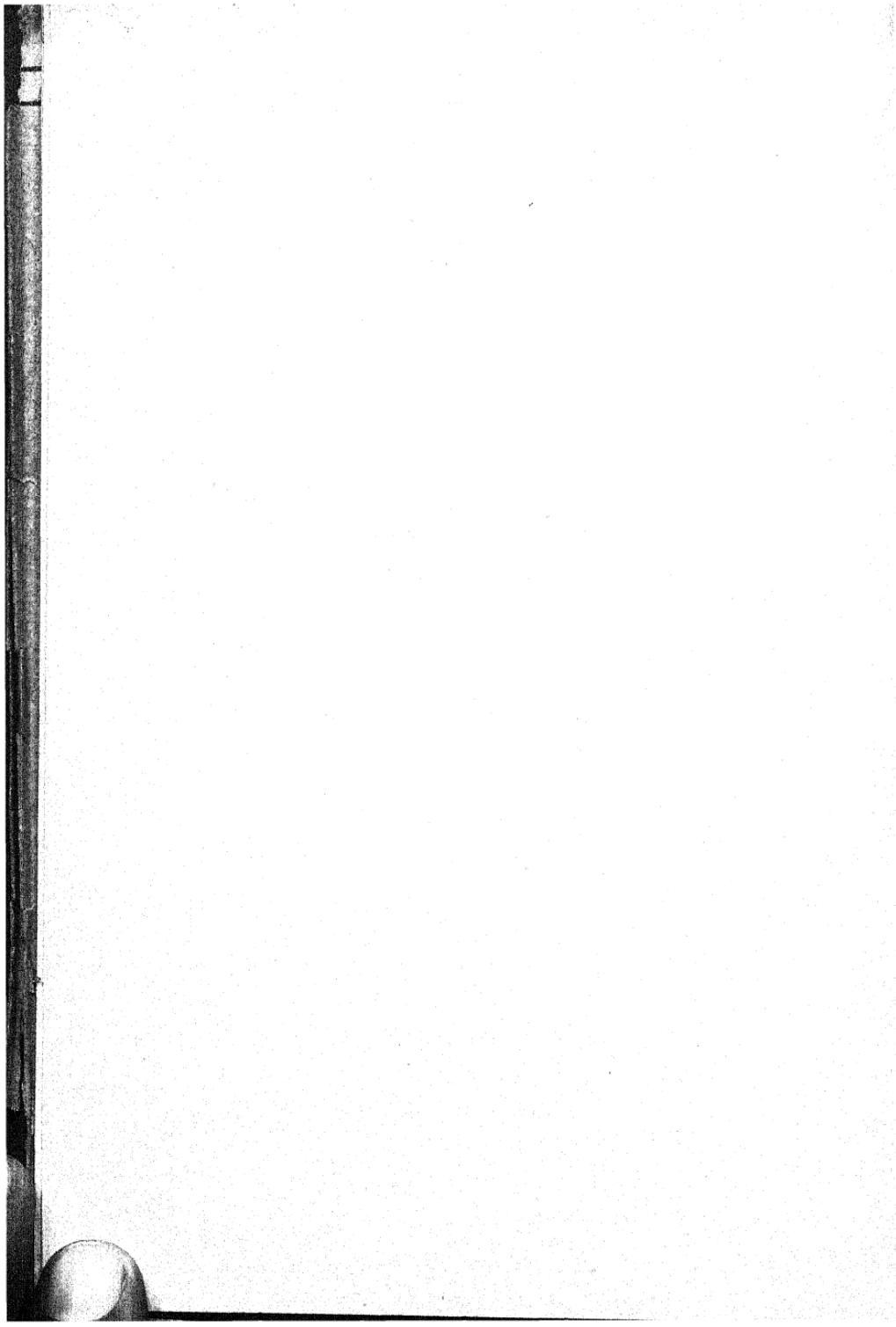
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# CONTENTS



	PAGE
EDINBURGH. A FANTASY . . . . .	5
I. KING'S PARK WALKS . . . . .	7
(a). To Duddingston Loch and Village.	
(b) Queen's Drive and Radical Road.	
2. ACROSS THE BRAID HILLS . . . . .	17
Liberton Car Terminus to Braids Car Terminus.	
3. BLACKFORD HILL WALKS . . . . .	18
(a) Across the Hill to Braid Burn.	
(b) Blackford Pond and Braid Wood.	
(c) Round the Hill.	
4. GREENEND, LITTLE FRANCE, AND CRAIGMILLAR CASTLE . . . . .	21
5. LIBERTON, KAIMES, FAIRMILEHEAD, AND BRAIDS	24
6. SWANSTON . . . . .	25
7. FAIRMILEHEAD TO COLINTON . . . . .	29
8. COLINTON DELL . . . . .	31
9. THE CALTON HILL . . . . .	32
10. DEAN BRIDGE AND ST. BERNARD'S WELL . . .	36
11. GRANTON EAST BREAKWATER AND NEWHAVEN .	38
12. GRANTON TO CRAMOND BY THE SHORE ROAD .	39
13. CRAMOND BRIG TO CRAMOND BY THE ALMOND RIVER . . . . .	41
14. CORSTORPHINE HILL AND REST-AND-BE-THANK- FUL . . . . .	43





Edinburgh, from Inverleith Park.

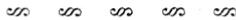
## EDINBURGH : *A Fantasy*



**T**O the rambler, Edinburgh is a happy hunting ground where the road to the romance of the town and the beauty of the country is ever open. As I write, pictures of the old grey city chase each other across my memory.



Morning, and the clouds are flying across the sky and the waves are breaking into white horses in the wide stretches of the Forth. The tug is turning, tossing, and dipping into the sea with the gulls which follow in her wake. Inchkeith, stark and white in the clear light, broods over this restless, hurrying and ever-changing scene; but to the south, Edinburgh opens her arms to the waves and is golden in this sunny morning of spring. The city, sure of her strength and calm in the shelter of Arthur's Seat, is the embodiment of peace.



After the oppressive heat of the day on land, the cool of the evening is a caress. Edinburgh lies to the south, an enchanted city bathed in the glow of the sinking sun. The lower reaches of Arthur's Seat slope up from the sea and the Lion's Head is silhouetted against the sky. Nearer at hand, the pillars of the National Monument on the Calton Hill fill the gap between the shoulders of the

## Rambles round Edinburgh

hill behind. The effect is extraordinary. Everything lies in shadow except the Calton Hill, which floats alone in the sunlight like the gallant little tender riding on the sea. The spires of the city buffet its sides like the waves on the bow of a boat, and the crouching lion of Arthur's Seat calmly awaits its coming. The illusion fades with the passing of the cloud, and the sun shines clear over the town picking out every spire and pinnacle,—from the National Monument and Nelson's Monument, the tower of the North British Hotel, the Doric column in St. Andrew's Square, the airy pinnacle of Sir Walter Scott's Monument, the Tron Church, the crown of St. Giles, the spire of the Tolbooth rising above all others, to the rugged mass of the Castle.

∞ ∞ ∞ ∞ ∞

The branches of the trees on Blackford Hill are ghostly through the haze of the autumn afternoon, and the distances are blue and grey and brown. The Pentland Hills rise cold and austere against the southern skyline, and the Lion's Head floats in space above the mist-enveloped slopes of the hill. Here and there a spire penetrates the mist and the afterglow is reflected in an occasional window. The old grey town is something to dream about—it is a city of romance.

∞ ∞ ∞ ∞ ∞

Nightfall, and the cold waters of the Firth are still and clear, though dark in the wintry shadows. The long line of Fife, like a black ribbon, stretches out to sea, and the little harbour lights wink to the stars. The steady flash from Inchkeith lighthouse and the moving lights of the cars along Newhaven shore give a feeling of security. The soft swish of the waves on the shore mingles with the rush of the traffic on land, then again there is peace.

## King's Park Walks

### 1. KING'S PARK WALKS.

The King's Park, the open spaces surrounding Arthur's Seat and Salisbury Crags, is bound up with the history and stories of Old Edinburgh. For centuries after the foundation of Holyrood Abbey, the Park was a trackless forest where the kings resident in the palace hunted deer. The name of Arthur's Seat itself goes back to the days of the British King Arthur, who from its height was said to have watched his men defeat the Picts in battle. The form of the hill, it is hardly necessary to add, resembles a crouching lion whose head is to the north.

The King's Park recalls memories of the 1745 rebellion, because Prince Charlie first ventured to approach Edinburgh from that direction. In order to keep out of range of the Castle Rock and out of sight of its hostile garrison, the Prince, circling round by Corstorphine and Morningside, left the high road and cut across country eastwards, until he entered the King's Park near Prestonfield through a breach made in the wall. Leaving his troops in the seclusion of Hunter's Bog, between the hill and the crags, he rode forward with a few favoured followers to St. Anthony's Chapel, now a ruin, where he came in sight of Holyrood Palace. In the Duke's Walk below, he presented himself as the Prince of Scotland to the crowd, composed for the most part of loyal Highlanders, which thronged between the hill and the palace. Amid the acclamations of the people, he then slowly approached Holyrood. The Prince's Highlanders encamped near Duddingston, and Prince Charlie himself slept there before the Battle of Prestonpans.

Strictly speaking, the Park is Crown property, but

## Rambles round Edinburgh

with few restrictions it is open to the public from dawn till dusk. It is used as a parade ground when such ceremonies are in progress, and in Hunter's Bog there is a rifle range which is used by local territorials. To lovers of Sir Walter Scott the western side of the King's Park will recall scenes in the *Heart of Midlothian*—Jeanie Dean's Cottage, St. Anthony's Well, and Muschat's Cairn.

### (a) To Duddingston Loch and Village.

From Dalkeith Road through the Park, round to Dalkeith Road at Cameron Toll, about 3 miles. To Duddingston Village (where bus may be taken),  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles.

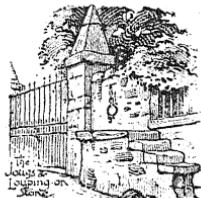
Entering the King's Park, from Park Road running off Dalkeith Road, by the Albert Gate—which was named after Queen Victoria's Consort—we will take the lower road to the right which rounds the western slopes of the hill. We pass under the Echoing Rock and the cliff known as Samson's Ribs—reddish jagged rocks sloping steeply down. On our right we see old St. Leonard's House, now St. Trinnean's School for Girls, and then Prestonfield Golf Course. The little cottage beside the golf course wall marks the "Wells o' Wearie"—the origin of this romantic name is a secret of the past. The road goes round the corner of the nether hill, which is covered with whins and elderberry trees where the grass has found a footing on the rocks. The undulating country before us, rolling in miles of meadow and woodland to the distant Lammermuir and Moorfoot Hills, seems to be dominated by Craigmillar Castle.

## King's Park Walks

Duddingston Loch comes into view, and in its deep waters the tower of the Parish Church is reflected. The marshes around the loch, which is a bird sanctuary, afford an ideal and safe nesting place for wild fowl. Two white swans admire their snowy plumage in the lake until the breeze ruffles its waters and the grey ripples dim the reflected pictures. The road above the loch seems to have been hewn out of the rock itself, and this narrow cutting is called Windy Gowl. The precipice of Hangman's Hill hides the loch until we round the corner and come to Duddingston village. Let us turn for a moment and realise the beauty of the view across the loch. Prestonfield House in the foreground is almost lost in the trees. Beyond the houses of Newington rise Blackford Hill and, further south, the Pentlands. We might be miles from the city, hidden as it is by the near slope of Arthur's Seat.

The village of Duddingston is extremely picturesque with its houses set at random round the Parish Church, which dates from the twelfth century. Outside the gates of the church, the "louping-on stone," the "lych," where coffins were placed before being taken into the church, and the "jougs" can still be seen. In olden times the Sabbath-breaker and the disturber of the peace were publicly rebuked and even came under the penalty of the "jougs," an iron ring with spikes which was fixed round the victim's neck.

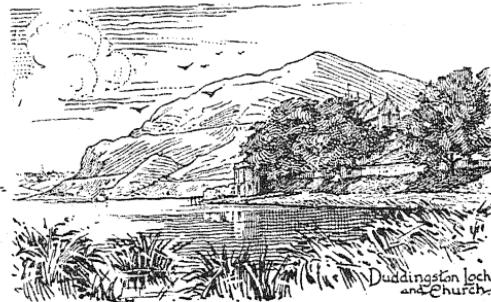
Sir Walter Scott had many associations with Duddingston Church, of which he was an elder. In the manse garden, which slopes down to the loch in a blaze of summer flowers, he wrote the *Heart of*



## Rambles round Edinburgh

*Midlothian.* The Rev. John Thomson, the famous preacher - painter, lived in the manse from 1805 till 1840.

We will take the first turning to the left and see the little village street, where great old trees shade the red-tiled roofs of the cottages. As we come to the high road, directly before us, the Celtic Cross, the memorial to the fallen heroes of 1914 to 1918, is lit with the rays of the sinking sun, and behind, a background symbolic of the peace for which they gave their lives,



are the noble trees in the Park where sheep are quietly grazing. The branches of the trees fleck the surface of the cross with light shadows.

If the pedestrian is already weary he can get a bus back to town, but the tramp along the main road is repaid by the beautiful picture we get of the loch. Through a gap in the hedge the effect is wonderful. It might be a scene in the heart of the Highlands. The near shore of the loch is carpeted in June with yellow irises, and dappled brown cows graze on the sweet grass. We see the square church tower and the little turret of the studio of Thomson of Duddingston at the loch side, while in the background the hill slopes sheer down into

## King's Park Walks

the water. Everything else is distant through the green of the trees.

We are brought back to the reality of the nearness of the town when we come to the breweries of Duddingston—there are seven breweries in this small area—and soon we reach Peffermill Road. Before crossing the Braid Burn, the weather-beaten building on our right is old Peffermill House, romantic with old associations and ghostly legends. We pass the Moray House Recreation Grounds, the drive leading up to Prestonfield House, Cameron Toll, and then we are back to Dalkeith Road again.

### (b) Queen's Drive and Radical Road.

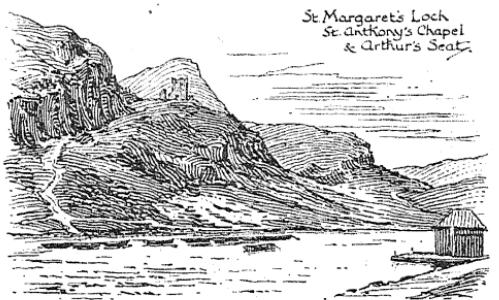
$3\frac{1}{2}$  to 4 miles.

The Queen's Drive commands a wonderful panorama over town and country, hill and sea. We again enter the King's Park at the Albert Gate and take the high road to the right, above the road to Duddingston. After climbing the steep road round the shoulder of the hill, it is a welcome rest to turn and gaze back to Edinburgh and its beautiful surroundings. Old Edinburgh sheltered by the hill contrasts with the wide sweep of land over to the Braids and Pentlands. From this height that part of the country seems to be quite wild and uncultivated.

The road climbs higher, and far below lie the still waters of Duddingston Loch. So clear are they that we see the ripples where the fish are rising. At the boat-house children are feeding the swans. Beyond is the Artillery Park with its lovely old trees. On our right we see Prestonfield House and the curious circular formation of its stables, which are hidden by the trees from a lower level. A former proprietor of Prestonfield

## Rambles round Edinburgh

House once gambled the entire property away but eventually won back all he had lost. From this height we notice that the trees around the house are planted in the form of an ace of clubs, the lucky card on which his fortune turned. Beyond Duddingston are the houses of Portobello and then the silver sheet of the sea. We look across country to the Garleton Hills, beside Haddington, and Traprain Law. The coast is misty and delicately grey, but the Bass Rock and North Berwick Law are visible. Far away on the horizon is the dim



outline of the May Island, lying where the Forth meets the sea. The panorama is one of the finest round Edinburgh, which is noted for its wonderful vistas.

The road turns eastward and leads us through a gap in the hill. This part is bleak and wild, and we can imagine what the country around Edinburgh must have been like in the days of the Old Town. Suddenly we come in view of Dunsapie—a tiny loch with bare banks lying between the lower slopes of Arthur's Seat. There's a rim of land and then the sea. We feel that if we walk on we will come to the edge of a precipice and be unable to go any further.

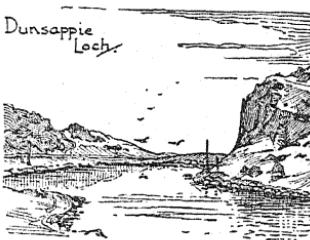
From Dunsapie a track leads up to the top of

## King's Park Walks

Arthur's Seat—822 feet above sea-level—and this is the easiest point of ascent. The climber is well repaid by the beautiful and extensive view, as far as the distant mountains of the Highlands. The view-finder on the top of the Lion's Head indicates and names all the hills and peaks around.

Dunsapie looks so shallow that accidents would seem to be impossible, but a post with a life-belt on it reminds us that sometimes the apparently impossible does happen!

The road which we thought must plunge into the sea turns sharply to the west round Whinny Hill, and we see that the Firth is by no means at our feet. Between us and the sea are Portobello and Leith, and even their most enthusiastic admirers could hardly call them beautiful. The Firth behind, however, makes up for the ugliness of the buildings in the foreground. Across the water are the villages and hills of Fife, and in the middle of the Forth, Inchkeith, grim and grey and stern, guards the ancient seaport. A span of the Forth Bridge rises beyond Corstorphine Hill.



The Old Town is again in view, and from this point seems quite strange. From the south and north the Castle dominates all other buildings, but at the first glance does not seem visible from here. There it is, however, like a continuation of the houses. We are in sight of Holyrood Palace and Holyrood Abbey—which was founded by David I., that “sair sanct for the crown,” in the twelfth century—with the terraced slopes of the Calton Hill behind. On our left is St. Margaret's

## Rambles round Edinburgh

Loch, with its flotilla of rowing boats and two white swans, and opposite the loch is the military parade ground. On the crest of the hill above are the ruins of St. Anthony's Chapel, an early Carmelite hermitage, from where Prince Charlie got his first glimpse of the old palace. Looking at the bare ruins with their rugged and rocky background, we might almost be living in those times, but the tenements on our right dispel this illusion, and we can only visualise in our imagination the scene when Bonnie Prince Charlie, a noble figure on the brow of the hill, was acclaimed by the crowd thronging below. All were not Jacobites, but the friendly spirit prevailed and he was allowed

to enter the palace, when a cannon was fired from the Castle, the shot bursting on the walls of Holyrood to warn him that his task was by no means accomplished.



Below the ruins of the chapel is St. Anthony's Well, and near the east end of the loch is Muschat's Cairn, the scene of the tryst between Jeanie Deans and Geordie Robertson in *The Heart of Midlothian*. The cairn is called after Nicol Muschat, who brutally murdered his wife at that lonely spot. Past the loch is St. Margaret's Well surrounded with a shrubbery. The opening is barred but we can see the vaulted roof of the well, and from the mouth of a carved head is a pipe from which the clear water trickles.

Here we are faced with two alternatives. We may keep to the Queen's Drive, but as it is a dreary part of the road we will be wise to go round the Radical Road "where the Radical Rascal ran." At the steep path leading off to the left, we leave the Drive and climb up and up to the very foot of the rocky cliffs at the top of

## King's Park Walks

the Crags. This was a favourite morning and evening walk of Sir Walter Scott's, and is vividly described by him in *The Heart of Midlothian*. He goes on to say that it had become almost impassable, and that it reflected "little credit on the taste of the Good Town or its leaders." Sir Walter was pleased to believe that this passage in his book gave rise to the construction of the present path, which was made in 1820 by unemployed men, whose unruly behaviour earned for them the nickname of Radicals.

From this height Old Edinburgh lies like a map below us. Starting from the right, in the level plain below, surrounded with its beautiful gardens is Holyrood Palace, the residence of the King and Queen when they visit the Scottish capital. The palace is dated fully three centuries later than the abbey, and the sixteenth century royal residence of the Stuarts, only part of which remains at the north-west frontage of the building, is quite distinct from the newer seventeenth century addition. We see the arches of the ruined abbey and the Edward VII. Memorial Gates at the entrance to the palace. Behind, on the terrace above, is the noble building, with its Doric columns and Egyptian doorways, of the Royal High School. Lower down is the monument, a circular temple, in memory of Robert Burns. Behind is the Calton Hill, with the pillars of the National Memorial, Nelson's Monument, and Dugald Stewart's Monument. Below are the imposing turrets of the old Calton Jail—sometimes mistaken for the Castle by the stranger arriving at the Waverley Station from the east—



Burns Monument & Calton Hill

## Rambles round Edinburgh

the high obelisk of the Political Martyr's Monument to the memory of those who suffered banishment in 1794 for their efforts for political reform, and below the round turret of the mausoleum of David Hume.

Then we see the clock on the North British Hotel, and still further west Sir Walter Scott's Monument. Further along, the spire of the U.F. Assembly Hall, the crown spire of St. Giles, the Tolbooth, and the Tron

Church catch the eye, and behind all these is the Castle. From this point of view the Esplanade, the Half-Moon Battery, and the cranes where the War Memorial is being constructed are visible. Further south than the Tron is the dome of the University surmounted by the gilded figure of youth holding aloft the torch of learning, and behind is the M'Ewan Hall.

The green spaces of the Meadows, where the Borough Loch used to be, and Bruntsfield Links, give colour to the scene; and coming back to the foreground, the streets of the Pleasance, Cowgate, and Canongate run steeply down to the park. Further south lies the open country. As we near the Albert Gate again, down below is Jeanie Dean's cottage—a tiny place with a red roof and two tall chimneys—on the ridge of Dumbiedykes.



## Across the Braid Hills

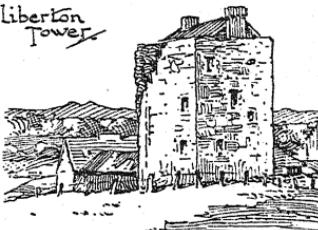
### 2. ACROSS THE BRAID HILLS.

Liberton Car Terminus to Braids Car Terminus.  
2 miles.

The pleasure of this walk across the fringe of the Braids lies in the beautiful picture of the city below us, and in the open and extensive view to the north and south.

From Liberton car terminus we take the road which leaves the highway at right angles and runs directly west. Should the going prove heavy, swing gates at close intervals give access to the path which skirts the Braids Golf Course.

The view is a wide and varied one, and affords to the stranger a good opportunity of seeing to its greatest advantage the magnificent situation of Edinburgh, the "Modern Athens," lying on the slopes between the Pentland Hills on the south and the Firth of Forth on the north. On a clear day we can see as far as the yellow sands of Aberlady Bay and Berwick Law and the Garleton Hills. Nearer at hand Craigmillar Castle peeps above the trees and the tower of Liberton Church dominates the foreground. We look down to the Braid Burn and to the Observatory on Blackford Hill. Arthur's Seat and the Crags rear their rugged heads above the city, and beyond, the blue of the Firth is lost in the blue of the sky. To the north, the spires and towers of the Old Town, the mass of the Castle, and the monuments on the Calton Hill lend romance to the view, while the shores



## Rambles round Edinburgh

of Fife and the distant Ochil Hills frame an unforgettable picture.

On the south the road is bounded by the whin-covered Braids and the undulating country sloping over to the Pentland Hills, which from this point are bare and bleak. Soon after leaving the main road we pass Liberton House and a quaint thatched cottage on the south, and the picturesque red roofs of the farms and the stolid square tower of Liberton, a mediæval castle, on the north. As we near the Braids terminus the scene changes. We see round the other side of Blackford Hill, and immediately before us are Easter and Wester Craiglockhart Hills and, further north, Corstorphine Hill.

Instead of going straight along the road past the Club House to the Braids car terminus, there is an alternative route. We may follow either of the two paths leading down to the Braid Burn and Blackford Hill—these are mentioned in the Blackford Hill Walks. The course of this walk is thus described by Sir Walter Scott in "Marmion":—

" . . . the route was laid,  
Across the furzy hills of Braid.  
They pass'd the glen and scanty rill,  
And climb'd the opposing bank, until  
They gain'd the top of Blackford Hill."

### 3. BLACKFORD HILL WALKS.

Blackford Hill has been described by Sir Walter Scott in the following lines:—

"Blackford! on whose uncultur'd breast  
Among the broom, and thorn, and whin,  
A truant-boy, I sought the nest,  
Or listed, as I lay at rest,  
While rose, on breezes thin,  
The murmur of the city crowd,  
And from his steeple jangling loud,  
Saint Giles's mingling din."

## Blackford Hill Walks

### (a) Across the Hill to the Braid Burn.

2½ miles.

Starting from Harrison Arch, West Mains Road, we climb the steep road to the Royal Observatory, an imposing building on the top of the hill. The Royal Observatory has been under the direction of the Astronomer-Royal for Scotland, who is also professor of practical astronomy in the University, since 1834. The present building was erected in 1893 for the instruments presented by the Earl of Crawford from his private observatory at Dunecht, Aberdeenshire, and the old observatory on the Calton Hill belongs to the city and is now used for instruction.



Passing the Observatory, we take the path to the left, with Craigmillar Golf Course on one side, and the broom and thorn and whin of the hill on the other. The spires of Edinburgh lie to the south and we face the Pentland Hills.



Before we descend to the valley of the Braid Burn we see the houses of Liberton straggling up the hill and the gaunt tower on the cross-road. Down in the valley the path follows the burn, which at this point bursts through the thick trees into the open. We can hear the ringing of stone before we come in sight of the quarry.

We may go straight on by the burn side to Liberton

## Rambles round Edinburgh

Dams, or climb the path to the road mentioned in the previous walk.

The quarry is burrowing further and further into the hill which seems already half-undermined. To the west of the quarry, a scratched and polished section of the rock is enclosed as an example of the glacial formation of the hill. In 1840, Charles Maclaren, later President of the Edinburgh Geological Society, showed this rock-surface to Agassiz—an American scientist who was born in Switzerland—who declared that it was the work of ice.

The lower path by the burn is sheltered by the rising slopes on either side. At the foot of the valley are the houses of Liberton, and beyond, the southern shoulder of Arthur's Seat. From Liberton Dams we may take the tram back to town.

### (b) Blackford Pond and Braid Wood.

$1\frac{3}{4}$  to 2 miles.

We will make the entrance at the foot of Oswald Road our starting point for another walk. On our right is the shining water of the pond where the children come to feed the swans, and where, if the frost is keen enough, there are skating and curling in winter.

The path, skirting the pond, leads round the other and steeper side of Blackford, and as we go we get beautiful little glimpses of the hill. Soon we reach the Braid Wood through which the burn wanders, suddenly emerging into the light of day at the Rustic Bridge. This we cross, and climb up the steep path past the wood on our right, where the great height of the trees makes the atmosphere dim and cool. Many of the tree trunks are ivy-covered and the ground is carpeted with thick vegetation.

## Greenend, Little France, etc.

After a climb we come to the road again which leads to the Braids on the west or to Liberton on the east. From the scenic point of view, the Liberton direction is preferable. The beauty of the distant city, of the Firth and of the surrounding hills, never loses its first charm.

### (c) Round the Hill.

The path right round the hill combines the features of the other walks mentioned.

## 4. GREENEND, LITTLE FRANCE, and CRAIGMILLAR CASTLE.

1½ miles.

This is a very pretty cross-country walk and one which is of historical interest, bringing recollections of the story of that hapless queen, Mary of Scotland. To save a tramp along the main road we will take the Gilmerton bus to the little hamlet of Greenend, a short distance further out than Northfield and the entrance to Liberton Golf Course.

Greenend with its few cottages, roofed with red tiles for the most part, is reached before the road climbs the hill to Gilmerton. After leaving the bus we go along the main road until we cross the burn, then we take the first turning to the left—a road which skirts the fields and dwindles into a footpath by the Burdiehouse Burn. After one or two cottages are passed we walk between a high wall bounding a wood and undulating fields.

We are in the heart of the country within a very short distance from Edinburgh, whose spires we cannot see to remind us of its nearness. We go round a corner and, leaving the high wall behind, see through the trees the

## Rambles round Edinburgh

green slopes of Liberton Golf Course. We climb the stile to the burn side. On the further banks of the burn an old horse is quietly grazing in the golden field of buttercups—indeed, in June the fields all the way are carpeted with daisies and buttercups. Another stile to climb and we are on the Old Dalkeith Road. It is only about half a mile across from road to road.

We must linger on the bridge and look back to the little idyll of pastoral beauty which we have just left. The yellow fields in the foreground give place to the well-kept turf on the golf course, and above the high trees we get a glimpse of the Pentland Hills.

Turning to the left from the path we go back towards the city. We are now at Little France, where Queen Mary's retainers stayed when their mistress visited Craigmillar Castle. As most of her personal followers were French, it is easy to trace the origin of the name given to the little homestead on the right-hand side of the road.

The old sycamore tree, which still, however, unfurls its green banner in summer, is enclosed with a railing, and a tablet informs the passer-by that it was planted by Mary Queen of Scots about 1561.

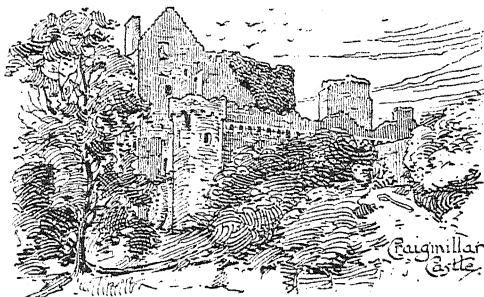
The wonderful personality of that beautiful queen triumphs over the centuries, and we, who are Scots at any rate, still grieve over her tragic story, while no one could but admit her indomitable courage even in the face of an ignominious death.

The first road to the right leads up to Craigmillar Castle, and as we climb we get a wider and wider view of the surrounding pastoral country. The Garleton Hills, always in sight, form a landmark. As we pass the corner of the hill, we instinctively pause to drink in the beauty of the scene. To the east stretches the wide

## Greenend, Little France, etc.

arm of the Forth, and to the right of Arthur's Seat we see the fortified island of Inchkeith. Our eyes sweep round the coast from the houses and spire of Joppa to North Berwick Law in the distance. On the other side of Arthur's Seat the roofs of the town sparkle in the sunlight. Turning round we see Craigmillar Castle crumbling with time and weather. What tales it could tell of the brave old days!

The castle, which dates from the fifteenth century, is gradually crumbling into ruin, but some parts are extra-



ordinarily well-preserved. After enquiring at the caretaker's cottage, the visitor will get access to the building. The castle shows how closely related the banqueting hall was to the cells in these days. The sounds of revelry in the hall above perhaps would penetrate to the dungeons below, in whose depths the prisoners pined. Queen Mary spent many of her leisure days at Craigmillar Castle, and the visitor is shown her room and her porridge bowl.

The view of Edinburgh from the outer wall of the castle, framed in the crumbling embattlements and in the trees is unforgettable—just an impression of the old town and the slope of the hill and the silvery thread of the sea!

## Rambles round Edinburgh

Going on our way, we come on to the Peffermill Road opposite the road from Duddingston, and from there take the bus back to town.

### 5. LIBERTON, KAIMES, FAIRMILEHEAD, and BRAIDS.

3½ miles.

The attraction of this walk is that we are in the depths of the country within three-quarter mile distance from Liberton car terminus.

Leaving the car we may follow the cross-road mentioned in the Liberton to Braids Walk for a short distance, and then take the first road to the left, leading up past Alnwickhill Industrial Home on the right and Alnwickhill Water Works on the left. In summer the cornfields are scarlet with flaming poppies, and through the gate we get a pretty little glimpse of the Service Reservoir. On past the cottages and we are at the main road.

Or we will go straight on from the terminus until the cross-roads at Kaimes are reached. Alnwickhill Road comes down on the right, and beyond it is the avenue up to Mortonhall Estate. We pass the other avenue further on our walk.

At Kaimes, on the left of the road to Penicuik, is the Liberton Settlement for Disabled Soldiers and Sailors, which was opened in July 1926 by Sir William Sleigh, the Lord Provost of the city. The stigma of charity cannot be associated with the veterans who live in these cottages.

At the cross-roads the sign-post tells us that it is 1¾ miles over to Fairmilehead. As we turn the corner to the right, we seem to be in different country. Before us

## Swanston

are the Pentland Hills, Caerketton and Allermuir, rising above Swanston, but the thick trees and the curve of the land hide any sign of the village. The foothills out to Hillend Park are dotted with a colony of new bungalows which seem to spring up like mushrooms in the night. The road stretches like a brown ribbon between the hedges, and the wooded country and the hills are before us.

Just after leaving the main road, on our right we pass a tree-shaded house, and on the other side a private road leading up to the Broomhills Farm. Then there is solitude. There is only the other drive to Mortonhall, until, as we near the other end of the byway, a road at the Luggie leads up to Morton House and Morton Mains.

At Fairmilehead, if we are lucky we may get a bus, but it is only a mile down to the Braids terminus. Going down the road, on our left are the hills where we see the T-shaped wood above Swanston, a little hamlet nestling among the trees. In the valley below us trickles the Braid Burn, and before us we see again the roofs of "Auld Reekie."

### 6. SWANSTON.

$2\frac{3}{4}$  miles.

The best time to visit Swanston is in the evening when the unutterable peace of "Stevenson's Village" is experienced to the full. To think of Swanston is to think of Stevenson. For the exile in Samoa, Swanston held the most beloved memories—Swanston, with its picturesque thatched cottages nestling among the trees at the foot of the Pentlands, was Stevenson's real home rather than the cold windy streets of Edinburgh.

## Rambles round Edinburgh

Leaving the Braids tram near the terminus we go along Greenbank Crescent and turn down the first opening to the left, a short lane between the houses leading to the path by the Braid Burn where Stevenson used to wander to and from Swanston. The people of the district, seeing him, hatless and with a vagabond air, pass along by the woods and past Comiston Farm, being canny Scots and suspicious of the unusual, thought him "daft."

The path winds down, with the burn on one side and the hedge on the other. Up on the Braids on our left are the red-roofed houses of Pentland Terrace and before us are the Pentland Hills. In summer the wild roses are in bloom and the fields are gay and sweet-smelling with clover and buttercups, while the cornfields sometimes seem to have a larger crop of poppies than of corn. After turning a corner we cross the burn by a footbridge and go straight up—the path to the right takes a longer winding—through Comiston Farm and by the side of a wood on to the road from Fairmilehead to Colinton. We cross the road and follow the byway down to the village.

Turning back we see the red roofs of the houses on the "furzy hills of Braid," Craiglockhart and Corstorphine Hills, and in the mist of the valley we can tell where the city lies. On our left, at the bend of the road, we see the white walls of a homestead. In olden days this was an inn called Hunter's Tryst, and is described by Stevenson in *St. Ives*.

We take to the road again and leave the town behind. We can plainly see the "T" wood on the slopes of Caerketton. This is supposed to be the only "T" wood in Scotland and was planted by one of the Trotters of Mortonhall.

## Swanston

The great charm of Swanston lies in its absolute seclusion. It is entirely hidden by the trees and we cannot see it until we are actually there. But, to the right of the village, peeping coyly through the trees is the white-walled gable of Stevenson's cottage, and directly before us the steading of the farm and grey old Swanston House.

On our right, before we reach the village, a road goes up to Stevenson's old home; but the cottage, sheltered by the fold of the hill between Caerketton and Aller-



*Swanston Cottage*

muir where "that nameless trickle" meanders by, can only be viewed from afar, as strangers are not allowed to pass beyond the entrance gate. We must read Stevenson's own picture in *St. Ives*, where he describes the cottage, which in summer at least is almost hidden by the trees. The passer-by can only see "the single gable and chimney of the cottage" peeping "over the shoulder of the hill."

We reluctantly tramp on round the hill past Swanston House and come to the more modern part of the village, where the stone cottages form three sides of a rectangle. Turning along past these round the last cottage, the unexpected beauty of the hidden village

## Rambles round Edinburgh

bursts upon us. Lovely old willows droop over the tiny burn which flows down between the cottages, whose thatched roofs have a quaintness all their own; set haphazard as they are, they form one of the prettiest little hamlets in Scotland.

The path dwindle<sup>s</sup> away until it loses itself on the slopes of Caerketton, and a little higher up, turning to look upon the village, almost in amazement we see to the north the spires of the magic city, described from this very spot by Stevenson,—

“Far set in fields and woods, the town I see  
Spring gallant from the shadow of her smoke,  
Cragged, spired and turreted, her virgin fort beflagged.”

We retrace our steps to the village, loitering in the peace and quiet of the evening. The blue wood smoke rises above the trees, the buttercups and clover on the village green scent the air, and the lambs call from the hills. The tiny burn trickles down from the Pentlands and pursues its tree-shaded path through the hamlet.

We go straight on past the newer cottages along the road which skirts Lothianburn Golf Course, and pausing on the last stile we look back to the village. The thatched cottages again are hidden but we get a last glimpse of Stevenson’s old home. The pasture land slopes gently up to the horizon hiding the city again, the valley of the Firth is hazy, but a span of the Forth Bridge catches the light of the sinking sun behind Corstorphine Hill, where we can see Rest-and-be-Thankful, embodying the peace of the evening scene. The grey of the sky is softly flushed with silver and rose as we wait for the bus at the red-roofed clubhouse of Lothianburn.

## Fairmilehead to Colinton

### 7. FAIRMILEHEAD to COLINTON.

2 miles. 3 miles from Braids terminus.

We crossed this road on our way to Swanston and got a glimpse of Hunter's Tryst.

We will take the tram to the Braids terminus and walk out to the cross-roads, or to save a mile of high road take a bus out to Fairmilehead. Approaching Fairmilehead we turn to the right and walk with the Pentlands on our left. A short distance from the cross-roads, in a field to the right, is a single standing stone, the Caiy Stone, or Battle Stone, which is said to commemorate an ancient battle. From this road we get a very good view of the "T" wood and of the trees and cottage at Swanston. From this distance out, and from this side of Edinburgh, the view of the town is framed by the hills. Behind the Braids, gay with the red-roofed houses, we see the top of Arthur's Seat and the hazy outline of the town. Nearer at hand is Wester Craiglockhart Hill, and at its foot the City Poorhouse and Hospital.

After passing the road up to Swanston, at the next bend we come to Hunter's Tryst, which is mentioned by Stevenson in *St. Ives*. The French prisoner, when returning from Swanston after visiting the cottage, defying the dangers which surrounded him, found a plain rustic cottage by the wayside which boasted the following sign: "The Hunter's Tryst, by Alexander Henry. Porter, Ales and British Spirits. Beds." Here used to meet the "Six Foot High Club," as Stevenson goes on to tell us, "an athletic society of young men in a good station, which made of the Hunter's Tryst a frequent resort." Sir Walter Scott

## Rambles round Edinburgh

and James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, were members of the Six Foot Club.

After passing Hunter's Tryst we take the first turning to the left and pass through beautiful rural scenery. On one side are meadows, carpeted with yellow and white in June, woods and hills, and, on the other, pasture land sloping over to Craiglockhart. Almost in front we see the immense building of Redford Barracks.

We come to a thickly wooded part of the road, and to the left see the top of Dreghorn Castle through the trees. Before us, on the road side at the fringe of the trees, rises the column in memory of the Covenanters who fell at the battle of Rullion Green. At the top of the pillar is inscribed, "Covenanters 1666." The monument was built from the pillars taken from old Edinburgh Infirmary. The road winds down through the trees and past the lodge up to Dreghorn Castle, now a school for boys, before crossing the Braid Burn at Redford Bridge.

It would be difficult to find a more beautiful road anywhere than at this point. The great old trees, firs and beeches and limes, brilliant rhododendrons at the burn side, and the hills peeping above make a perfect picture.

A short distance further on we come to Colinton village, now a suburb of Edinburgh, where we will get a tram as soon as we leave the by-way.

## Colinton Dell

### 8. COLINTON DELL.

1½ or 2½ miles.

Nowadays the Colinton car takes one right out into the country at the foot of the Pentland Hills, and a short, easy walk, which we start from the car terminus, leads through the Colinton Dell.

After leaving the tram we keep to the right of the road and descend a flight of narrow steps leading down from between the houses to the entrance to the dell. We cross the old bridge, built in 1686, over the Water of Leith, to the north of which is Colinton Church and the old churchyard. The present church was built in modern times, but it is interesting to know that from 1823 to 1860, Dr Balfour, the grandfather of R. L. Stevenson, was minister in the older church. The manse garden, sloping down to "that dirty Water of Leith," and overlooked by the church and church-yard, is vividly described in *Memories and Portraits*, by Stevenson himself. The Water of Leith might have been a rushing torrent if its waters had not been so much diverted for the workings of mills, particularly paper-mills. However, at the present day, owing to the drainage system, its waters are comparatively clean.

We go straight on down the Dell Road until the path is reached. The path follows the stream which now gurgles over its rocky bed, now broods in dark pools under the banks, and we walk in the shade of the tall old trees. On the left are the grounds of Hailes House, and on the right, the steep wooded slopes of the estate of Colinton House, which was built near the ruins of the old Castle of Colinton. The dell is a favourite haunt for picnic parties and there are always children playing beside the river, which we cross by stepping

## Rambles round Edinburgh

stones. A rustic bridge, to take the place of the stepping stones, is to be built over the river. Then we walk up above the Water of Leith with a mill dam rushing along on our right.

At Redhall Mill, we leave the dell and get on to a pleasant country road. Further on past Redhall Mill are the ruins of Kate's Mill, a very old paper-mill, where, it is said, the paper was made on which the first notes issued by the Bank of Scotland were printed.

The road winds on, and we turn up the first opening to the right, which brings us out opposite Redford Barracks. An alternative route is to follow the road straight on until Craiglockhart Avenue is reached and then turn up to the right on the main road. This will add another mile on to our walk.

From the Colinton Road we look over green meadow land to Corstorphine Hill, to the west of which can be seen two spans of the Forth Bridge, and the city divided by the blue windings of the Firth from the coast of Fife. To the south, close at hand, are the Pentlands, and to the north the distant Ochil Hills.

### 9. THE CALTON HILL.

Magnificent as the varied views of Edinburgh may be, to get the true atmosphere of the city we must climb the Calton Hill. The view from the Castle is more extensive, but when we are on its ramparts we do not notice the part which the Castle itself plays in the life and structure of the city. From the Calton, however, particularly from the southern slopes, we can see the whole vista of the Royal Mile, from the Castle down to Holyrood, and the picturesque ruined arches of the Abbey with the green slopes of Arthur's Seat behind.

## The Calton Hill

This is the Old Town, which was built on the ridge of the hill stretching from between Salisbury Crags and the Calton up to the Castle Rock, with numerous closes running down on either side. In former times the Nor' Loch washed the northern slopes of the hill, but was drained at the building of the New Town, and in its stead are the lovely gardens of Princes Street and the cutting of the London and North Eastern Railway. The Nor' Loch was once famed as the place where witches passed through the ordeal of water.

The entire area of the Calton Hill used to belong to the citizens of Edinburgh, but is now very much encroached on by London Road, Regent Road, the gardens of the houses, and the playground of the Royal High School. Broad walks and a carriage drive have been constructed round the crown of the hill.

From the Post Office we turn eastwards along Waterloo Place and cross the Regent Bridge, then on the left-hand side a flight of steps gives access to the Calton Hill. Ascending these, and turning to the right, we reach the monument to Dugald Stewart, 1753 to 1822, a Scottish philosopher who by his writings popularised the philosophy of his day. The monument is in the style of a Grecian temple, circular in form with eight pillars supporting a canopy, through which is seen a carved stone funereal urn.

To the north of this monument is a dull building in the form of a tower, which is the Old Royal Observatory, founded in 1776, but never completed according to the design. The later Royal Observatory, now the City Observatory, built in 1818 and designed by Playfair, is a noble building in the shape of a St. George's



## Rambles round Edinburgh

cross. The architecture is in the Doric style, as is the tomb of Professor Playfair beyond. Later the Observatory was improved by the addition of an astronomer's house.

Then we face the Doric pillars of the National Memorial, which is sometimes, on account of its unfinished condition, called "Scotland's Disgrace"; but from the point of view of the picturesque, nothing could be more effective. This monument, which was planned in 1816 to commemorate the soldiers and sailors who fell in the Napoleonic wars, was founded in 1822 and begun in 1824. However, owing to lack of funds, only twelve columns with architrave and basement were completed. The monument, as far as it stands, is a reproduction of the Parthenon at Athens. Seen on a clear day when the Firth and Arthur's Seat are framed between the pillars; seen at night when all detail is lost in the gloom; seen in the mist when the distances are mysterious and alluring: it is always beautiful. All these monuments are a testimony to the genius of the architect, W. H. Playfair, a nephew of Professor Playfair.

Behind the National Memorial is a tank, captured from the Germans and awarded by His Majesty's Government to Edinburgh Central War Savings Committee in September 1919. This grim relic of modern warfare has a fitting position on the top of the hill beside the National Monument, where it will keep ever fresh in the public's memory the heroism of those who fell in the Great War of 1914 to 1918.

From the south side of the hill we get the most romantic view of Edinburgh. To the east, are Holyrood and the King's Park, and, nearer at hand, the Royal High School and Burns' Monument; to the

## The Calton Hill

west, the Castle, and, crowding between, tall crooked houses, grey and battered with age—the embodiment of Old Edinburgh. Turning westwards, we see, where was once an old country road called the “Lang Gait,” the New Town sloping down to the north, with the broad, wonderful vista of Princes Street, the Mound, formed by the deposits of rubbish dug out for the erection of the New Town and taking the place of the path over the stepping-stones called “Geordie Boyd’s Brig,” and over all, old and new, the Castle.

We are brought back to the past as we examine the



Edinburgh  
from the Calton Hill.

crest, the bas-relief of the “San Josef,” and the inscription above the door at the entrance of the monument, a high circular tower on the rugged summit of the hill, to the memory of Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson, and “to the great victory of Trafalgar so dearly purchased with his blood.” At the top of the monument is a large stone time-ball, which was erected in 1852 to regulate the chronometers of the vessels lying at Leith and Granton. Every day machinery raises the ball shortly before one o’clock, and it drops exactly at the hour. An electric clock in the Royal Observatory on Blackford Hill is attached by wire to the ball and to the

## Rambles round Edinburgh

time-gun at the Castle. On the anniversary of Trafalgar, to the casual observer the monument is triumphant and gay with flags, but to the initiated the decoration has a deeper meaning—it is the message, "England expects every man to do his duty," which Nelson flashed to his fleet on that memorable day.

And then we leave the hill—leave the mystery-enveloped scene—and descend to the busy streets of modern Edinburgh.

### 10. DEAN BRIDGE and ST. BERNARD'S WELL.

A very pretty walk in the heart of the city is the path by the Water of Leith from Dean to Stockbridge. Starting from the West End of Princes Street we go right down Queensferry Street until we come to the Dean Bridge.

A steep road to the left at the west side of the bridge leads to the path by St. Bernard's Well, but before we descend, it is well worth while to cross the bridge which rises to the great height of 106 feet above the ravine of the river below. The bridge was built in 1832 from the design by Telford, and commands a beautiful prospect of the surrounding country. On the west we see Corstorphine Hill, and to the north-east we look far down the Water of Leith, over the magnificent foliage of the trees in summer, through which the circular temple of St. Bernard's Well is glimpsed, to the Firth of Forth and the hills of Fife.

Turning down to the left, then, we come to the very old village of Dean, which dates from the time of David I. The mills of Dean were mentioned in the grant given in his charter to Holyrood. There are still to be seen seventeenth century cottages and very old flour

## Dean Bridge & St. Bernard's Well

mills on the left, but instead of crossing the old bridge, which used to be the route to Queensferry, we, following the sign "To St. Bernard's Well," turn down a lane on the right between customs houses and other buildings. Soon we emerge on the banks of the river, which has encircled the outlying districts of the town since leaving the shelter of Colinton Dell in its wild rush onwards to the sea, and we pass under the Dean Bridge, whose height is quite awe-inspiring.

The path follows the Water of Leith between beautiful gardens and grand old trees. Silvery willows are reflected in the water, and above the high bank of trees on the other side the Gothic tower of the Holy Trinity Episcopal Church is bathed in sunlight.

Soon we come to the temple, which was built over St. Bernard's Well by Lord Gardenstone in 1790. The temple is circular, the canopy being supported by pillars through which is seen the statue of Hygeia, the ancient Greek goddess of health, sculptured in white marble and holding out a cup of the healing water. The sulphurous waters of the well have long been famed for their healing powers, which the visitor may test for himself. There is a legend that long ago the health-giving property of the spring was discovered by St. Bernard of Clairvaux in his pilgrimage throughout western Europe preaching the gospel of Christ. This suggests the origin of the name.

Shortly after the well is passed the path terminates in the district of Stockbridge, and, crossing the river, we walk along Dean Terrace to get the tram up to town.



## Rambles round Edinburgh

### II. GRANTON EAST BREAKWATER and NEWHAVEN.

2½ miles.

We will take the Granton car by Goldenacre and go down to "where the East wind is brewed fresh and fresh every morning." We can go right to Granton terminus and walk eastwards to the breakwater, or cut down from the tram line by Wardie Steps, cross the main road, and

go through one of the arches under the railway to the shore.



At any time of the year this walk is very pleasant. When the snell east wind blows and sends the clouds flying, the spray whips our cheeks, the air is clear as crystal, and the shores of Fife lie like an open book before us. On a summer morning the water lies still and unruffled, the distance is misty, and the island of Inchkeith, the fortified island of the Forth, floats in the haze and seems as if it might vanish from sight at any moment.

Before we descend to the shore we see to the west the island opposite Cramond, but the mist hides the span of the Forth Bridge. A few bathers are swimming out to the raft, moored out from about halfway along the breakwater, or lazily float on the still water. On our left is Granton Harbour, and to the east the docks of Newhaven.

We may walk from Granton to Newhaven by the road, or by the Kelvie Parade, a path above the shore. As the claim to beauty—a beauty which is transient and

## Granton to Cramond by Shore Road

elusive—of this part of the walk lies in the view out to the Firth, one of the best times to go is when the peace of evening has descended, when the afterglow is fading from the sky, and when lights are flashing from land and sea. The old cottages at Newhaven itself, however, are exceedingly quaint and picturesque, and well worth a visit.

And there is always romance about a harbour or an old seaport. The tang of the seaweed, the smell of the tarry old boats, the noises of loading and unloading, the voices of the sailors, stir the imagination and intensify the picture of the roads that go over the sea to the four corners of the earth.

### 12. GRANTON to CRAMOND by the SHORE ROAD.

3½ miles.

To visit Cramond is, in the words of Robert Louis Stevenson, to visit "a little hamlet on a little river." Here we are down on the shores of the Forth with the city far behind, and the quiet bays and wooded promontories of the river before us.

The best route from the rambler's point of view is the shore-road from Granton. Leaving the car terminus there, we walk directly west past the railway siding, the Gas Works and the Chemical Works. This does not sound enticing, and at first may not even look inviting, but we will go on, and the sight of the sea with its misty islands, the distant shores of Fife, and the nearer shore, where



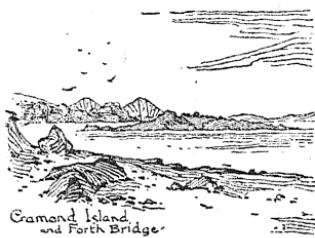
## Rambles round Edinburgh

at the edge of the waves two old men are gathering coal washings, makes us forget the drab buildings. Two carved stone pillars on our left, relics of the days

gone by when Craigroyston was a noble residence, strike an incongruous note in the huddle around. Then we leave the works behind, and the path follows the shore all the way, skirting the wooded grounds of several ancient

houses. The tower of Muirhouse, in olden times a royal hunting box, rises above the trees. We pass the grounds of Broomfield and Silverknowe, and then the cornfields near Lauriston Cottage, where the path from Davidson's Mains comes down to the sea.

This walk is most beautiful in late autumn when the woods turn yellow and brown with the touch of frost,



Cramond Island  
and Forth Bridge.



Cramond  
Ferry.

when the sea is calm and unruffled, stretching in a blue-grey mist over to Cramond Island and losing itself in the haze which envelopes the islands of the Forth and the shores of Fife. We see the red-roofed cottages of

## Cramond Brig to Cramond

Cramond above the trees and beyond, on the next point, Barnbougle Castle in its picturesque surroundings of woodland and sea.

The village of Cramond itself slopes higgledy-piggledy down to the shore where the River Almond sluggishly flows into the Forth. The village street runs right down to the water, and at Cobble Ferry, where the boats lie drawn up on the beach, the ferryman will leisurely row the pedestrian over to the other side, where the path goes through Dalmeny Woods to Queensferry.

Leaving the charming scene behind, we mount the hill, past the old inn and the straggling cottages, to the top of the road, where we will get a bus back to town.

### 13. CRAMOND BRIG to CRAMOND by the RIVER ALMOND.

$1\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

We will take the Queensferry bus from the Mound out to Cramond Brig, a picturesque little hamlet on the Almond River which here forms the boundary between the City of Edinburgh and Linlithgowshire. We leave the bus just beyond the eight-arched bridge, which was built over the river in 1823, and turn down the first road to the right past the inn.

Leaning on the parapet of the old brig of Cramond enjoying the peaceful scene—tall trees overhanging the turbulent brown depths of the river—and listening to the drop, dropping of the frosted leaves, we feel the spell of olden days upon us. Here James V.—“The Poor Man’s King,” who was fond of wandering about the country in disguise and consequently was greatly beloved of his people—in the guise of the “Guid Man o’ Ballengeich” was attacked by a band of wandering

## Rambles round Edinburgh

gipsies. Taking up his position on the narrowest part of the bridge, the king was able to ward off the rogues with his sword until Jock Howieson, a miller working in the fields near by, came to his rescue with a flail, and between them they routed the gang. After the fray Howieson brought a basin of water and a towel for the king to wash himself. In his gratitude James gave some lands to Howieson on the condition that whenever the king visited the district he was to be provided with a basin of water and a towel to wash his hands.

Crossing the bridge we turn down the path on the



east side of the river, and already we can hear the rush of the water and the whirr of the mill wheel. We pass Dowie's Mill, its red-tiled roofs bright against the trees, and walk between the rushing river and the still waters of the mill dam. On a morning in late autumn, the wooded hill brilliant with the copper-coloured beech trees against the blue of the sky, is a vivid and beautiful picture, while the brown, foaming river and the creaking mill wheels make music in our ears.

We come to Peggy's Mill, and here the pathway leaves the banks of the Almond. We turn to the right, up past the cottages, look across the brown stubby fields

## Corstorphine Hill, etc.

and beyond the trees to the tops of the distant Pentlands, and pass the ivy-covered tower of Inveralmond, before coming on to the road down to the village of Cramond—Celtic for “the fort on the Almond.”

Turning to the left, then, we walk down towards the sea, and after passing Fairafar cottages reach the higher part of Cramond village.

Cramond is a very old village. It was the site of an important Roman station, and in the churchyard, which we passed on our left after turning up from the shore on our way from Granton, three altars and coins of eleven emperors and other Roman remains were found. The ancient church, which was rebuilt in 1656, was originally dedicated to St. Columba.

However, instead of turning down to the sea again, though we would linger many an hour in this beautiful neighbourhood, from the corner of the road we will get the bus back to town.



### 14. CORSTORPHINE HILL and REST-AND-BE-THANKFUL.

3 miles.

The beauty of Edinburgh has still to be experienced from the western boundaries of the city, and to enjoy the glorious view of the open country between the Pentland Hills and the Firth of Forth we will ramble round Corstorphine Hill.

Again we will take the Queensferry bus from the Mound, and after passing Blackhall we will begin our

## Rambles round Edinburgh

tramp at the foot of Clermiston Road, on the left, which leads past Barnton Quarry up over the hill.

Although in winter the views are never so clear as in summer, this walk is especially beautiful at the close of a November day. It was a day of blue-grey mists when we climbed the hill squelching the mud of the road beneath our feet, and the country before us was hazy. The sharp outline of the Pentlands against the sky contrasted with the haze which wreathed the lower slopes of the hill. A sheet of water in some fields far below reflected the rose and grey and orange of the sky. Across the bare tree tops we could scarcely trace the line of the Forth.

On the left is the wooded slope of the hill above Barnton Quarry, and we pass on our right the Fox Covert at the top of the hill and the Buttercup Dairy Poultry Farm. Before descending the road down to Corstorphine village, now a suburb of Edinburgh, we pass playing fields and then turn sharply round to the left up Cairnmuir Road. Clermiston Road leads directly down to the village, and by following it we would miss the most attractive part of the walk.

Cairnmuir Road climbs steeply up the hill, and the new houses on the right command a wonderful view of the surrounding country. The wood on our left, still green with its fir trees, is private ground belonging to Hillwood House. The road dwindles into a path which skirts Murrayfield Golf Course, but the golfers are few and far between at this time of a winter afternoon. We hurry past the rustic seats, which, no doubt, would be welcome in summer after the upward climb. A mountain sheep grazing on the golf course, with the Pentland Hills, grander and more rugged in the November haze, as a background, makes a picture typical of the High-

## Corstorphine Hill, etc.

lands rather than of the outskirts of a city. Clermiston Tower, rising above the trees on the top of the hill, is tantalising in its nearness, but the woods between it and the path are private ground, and we cannot climb up to it.

We follow the wooded path to View Point, where the rustic seats at the crest of the hill command a magnificent panorama. Here, indeed, we may Rest-and-be-Thankful as we look upon the beauty of the scene. To the east lies the city, to the south, beyond the golf course in the foreground, is the open land



bounded by the Pentlands on the horizon, and to the north, beyond the wooded summit of the hill itself and across the undulating country, stretches the haze which we know is hiding the Forth.

This was the scene of the parting of Alan Breck and David Balfour in *Kidnapped*. Stevenson himself must have known this walk well. He describes the way from Queensferry by the by-road over Corstorphine Hill, and when David and Alan "got near to the place called Rest-and-be-Thankful, and looked down on Corstorphine bogs and over to the city and the castle on the hill," they both stopped, for they knew without a word that they had come to the parting of the ways.

## Rambles round Edinburgh

Scrambling down the hill we reach the lower path again, and still keeping to our left, come on to a by-road leading down the hill between the two sections of the golf course. Turning back to see the sunset, the effect is surpassingly lovely. A pine tree is dark against the clear rose and pale green of the sky, already lights are twinkling from the houses in the valley below, and we must hasten to reach the town before darkness is upon us.

Our by-road brings us out on to Ravelston Dykes, which we may follow right down to Dean, but as it is getting dark we, with a last lingering look at Rest-and-be-Thankful, will turn down Murrayfield Road, past the clubhouse to Western Terrace, where we will get the tram back to town.

